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Nutrition Education and Training Program

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE/FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE/WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250
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Several programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service help bring food to children in the Nation's schools. However, making the right foods available is only one step toward building a healthy nutrition consciousness. The Nutrition Education and Training Program (NET) was established in 1977 to teach good nutrition habits and teach the fundamentals of nutrition to children, parents, educators, and food service personnel.

WHAT ARE THE PROGRAM'S MAJOR GOALS?

- To encourage good eating habits and teach children the relationship between food and health.
- To train food service personnel in nutrition and food service management and to encourage the use of the cafeteria as an environment for learning about food and nutrition.
- To instruct educators in nutrition education and in the use of the cafeteria as a learning laboratory.
- To develop appropriate educational materials and curricula.

HOW DOES NET OPERATE?

NET is administered by the Food and Nutrition Service through grants to State educational agencies. Each participating State employs a Nutrition Education and Training coordinator, who assesses the State's nutrition education needs and develops a plan to meet them. Schools and institutions apply for grants to the State agency, which sets priorities for disbursing its Federal NET funds.

HOW ARE CHILDREN REACHED?

NET reaches children in cafeterias, classrooms, and the community. Trained educators and food service personnel use the cafeteria to reinforce nutrition lessons, and use other innovative teaching tools in the classrooms. The various child nutrition programs (the National School Lunch, Breakfast, and Child Care Food Programs) serve as models of good nutrition. In some areas, the NET Program has been used to inform parents about nutrition to increase their interest in their children's eating habits. Funds have also been used to develop materials to send home with children and to provide nutrition information for use in local media.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE, AND HOW?

The program is for all children in public and private schools and both residential and nonresidential child care institutions. Interested schools and institutions should request the name of the appropriate official in their State educational agency from the Nutrition and Technical Services Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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